## Report from the Waitlist Task Force

Fall-Winter 2008-09

1/23/09

**Background**: At the October closed faculty session of Instructional Council meeting, there were questions raised regarding the operation of the automated wait list system for class registration and college procedures related to that system. At the open session of that IC meeting, faculty requested that a Task Force be convened to review that system and those procedures. The Task Force met twice and conducted further work via email. The task force included Mike Flodin, instructional administrator and chair, David Endicott, instructional administrator, Rachel Goon and Lynn Lewellen, faculty, Mary McCabe, Janine Mott, Chris Stancich and April Reid, student services.

**Overview**: The waitlist system was designed primarily toward, and works best for, helping students gain access to classes that are full in a fair and orderly manner during the weeks that registration is open prior to the start of the quarter. Before having this system, when a student dropped a class that was full during the registration period, whatever student happened to be the next one to attempt to register got that seat. This was frustrating to students and advisors, seemed arbitrary and unfair, and did not give any priority to students who had been at the college longer. The system was not designed quite as well for, and most issues seem to arise around, what happens just before the quarter begins and during the first few days of the quarter. This software is provided to TCC by the CIS and we are not able to make any programming changes to it.

**Actions and Recommendations:**

1. The Taskforce collected and reviewed various existing college web pages and printed materials that present or document information about the wait list system. Minor edits were made to make these documents more compatible, but they were found to be largely consistent. In addition to the web links below, there are multiple paper documents that are used in new student orientation, HD 101 classes, and by advisors and others. See:

<http://www.tacomacc.edu/currentstudents/webregistration/waitlistinformation.aspx>

<http://www.tacomacc.edu/resourcesforstudents/counselingandadvisingcenter/advising/faq.aspx>

<http://www.tacomacc.edu/currentstudents/newstudentorientation/whatyouneedtodonext/registerforclasses.aspx>

p. 14 of current TCC Catalog

1. The Task Force determined that an additional document was needed, directed at the interests and issues of faculty, and we created that document.

See: [*http://www.tacomacc.edu/facultyandstaff/instructorbriefcase.aspx*](http://www.tacomacc.edu/facultyandstaff/instructorbriefcase.aspx)

1. The Task Force recommends that the college continue the current practice of leaving decisions regarding lengths of wait lists for various courses up to the respective departments and divisions.
2. The Task Force recommends a minor change that all wait list activity be shut off on the last business day prior to the first class day of each quarter (typically the Friday before the first Monday). Currently all activity is shut off on this day except that individual departments had the ability to allow students to continue to sign onto wait lists after the quarter was underway.
3. The Task Force recommends that students be provided hyperlinks to existing online waitlist information in two additional locations. One is within the student portal near to where students have the option to “manage my waitlists” and the other is on the online class schedule application near where the enrollment and waitlist length is displayed. We have contacted appropriate Information Systems staff regarding these changes.
4. The Task Force recommends that the college continue the practice of providing wait lists for all transfer courses and all developmental education courses. The Task Force believes that each professional-technical program should decide on its own which courses within the program, if any, should have wait lists. The ABE program should also make its own decisions regarding waitlists.
5. After discussion, the Task Force recognized that there may be special issues with online or hybrid online classes that may call for different waitlist procedures than used for face-to-face classes. However, we had no faculty or staff on the Task Force with experience with eLearning classes. We recommend that the eLearning department get together with faculty who teach eLearning courses to determine what changes to the standard procedures may be appropriate for eLearning classes and document those variations for students and faculty. That documentation can be added to the documents referenced above in 1 and 2 as well as being published elsewhere.